

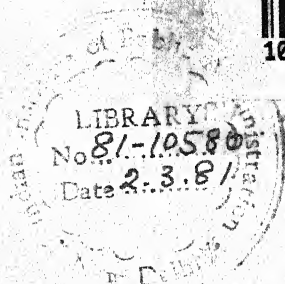
PROBLEMS IN ADMINISTRATION



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PROBLEMS IN ADMINISTRATION
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PREFACE

The year 1979 was celebrated as the Silver Jubilee year of the Indian Institute of Public Administration. The Registrar I. I. P. A. New Delhi had suggested inter alia the following as part of the engagements of this year :-

"To draw attention to the brighter side of implementation of schemes and programmes, administrators may be asked to write about their experience with specific reference to the problems they faced and how they came to tackle them. These interesting success stories may be compiled either by local branch or at the Head Quarters of I. I. P. A."

The Kerala Regional branch celebrated the Silver Jubilee year and took up several activities including this suggestion of the Registrar. We wrote to about 60 persons including Ex-Ministers, retired officers and senior officers in service requesting them to write about their experience about problems they faced. The anecdotes received in reply so far have been compiled together and published in this book.

This compendium contains the experience of eminent administrators in solving problems which they came across during their tenure in public service. It is hoped that this brochure will be of help to future administrators in their attempts to gear the machinery to meet the ever-increasing challenges in the field of administration.

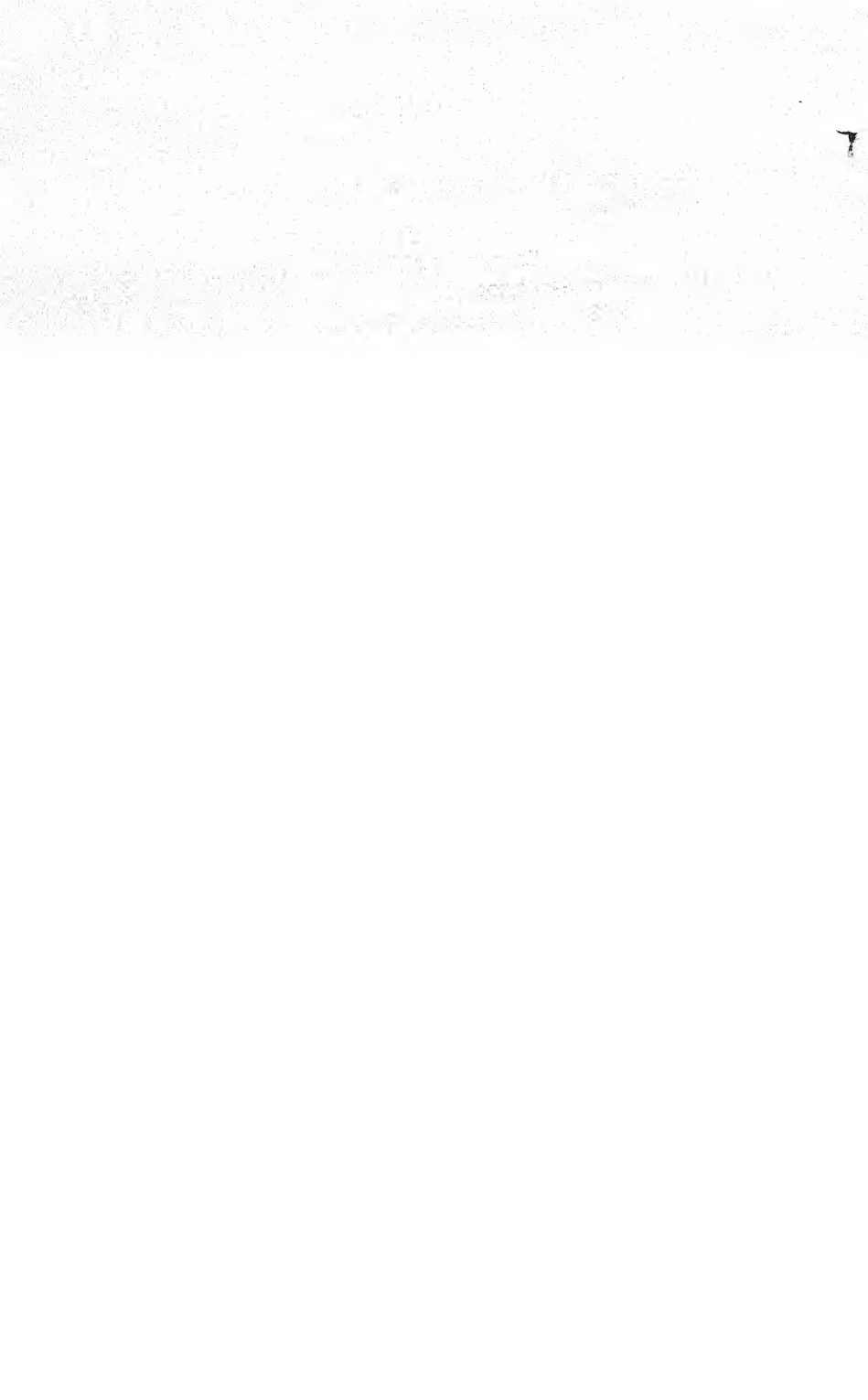
We express our gratitude to the contributors for having readily responded to our request and helped us to bring out this publication in this form.

G. BHASKARAN NAIR
Chairman,
Kerala Regional Branch, IIPA
Trivandrum,

In
commemoration of the Silver Jubilee of
the Indian Institute of Public Administration
1979

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HOW RESPONSIVE IS THE PRESENT ADMINISTRATIVE MACHINERY?

C. Achutha Menon

The general complaint against the present administrative machinery is that it is not at all responsive to the present day needs of society, that it is wooden and inflexible, always going by rules, ignoring the very purpose for which those rules have been framed at all. This criticism is by and large true. Over the years a large body of rules and precedents have accumulated which govern the implementation of all policy decisions of the Government, with the result that the decisions get bogged down in the secretariat and all lower levels of administration down to the village office, with queries and counter queries and pushing of files from one desk to another. Much of this could be safely cut off without detriment to the efficiency of administration and even safety of funds about which the administration is supposed to be so keen. And yet nobody has yet attempted to get about the task of cutting off the dead wood of useless procedures retaining only the very few which are really necessary for ensuring impartiality of administration and safety of funds. Of course, only a very experienced person well versed with the intricacies of administrative procedures and at the same time endowed with a passion for social justice and a vision of how it could be achieved will be able to discharge this task. Such persons are indeed a very rare commodity. But it would be worth while to search for and find one and entrust the task of suggesting simplification of procedures to him.

But it will be wrong to imagine that nothing worthwhile can be achieved by way of implementing measures intended to bring about social changes, even by the use of the present administrative machinery by a few adaptations here and there, without any radical reorganisation. During my term as Chief Minister from 1970 to 77, I have had at least a few experiences of that kind. I shall here relate one such. This I am doing not with a view to stalling any radical change in the administrative procedures, the necessity for which, I have keenly felt more than any one else.

The experience I wish to narrate is the one in the implementation of that Section of the Kerala Land Reform (Amendment) Act which confers ownership right on Kudikidappukars. The Act confers the right of ownership on dwellers of kudi-kidappu huts to the extent of 3 cents in Municipal Corporations, 5 cents in other municipalities and 10 cents in panchayats, around the site of the dwelling together with the hut. The compensation to be given to the landlord is only 25% of the actual market value of the land, out of which half i. e. one eighth will be met by the state Government while the other half or one eighth of the land value has to be paid by the hutment dweller in 12 instalments spread over a period of 12 years. The entire Act including the provision conferring ownership rights on Kudikidappukars was notified to come into force on 1st January 1970. Therefore Government asked Kudikidappukars all over the state to apply for acquiring ownership rights within a specified date.

So far there was no problem. All this could be done from the secretariat itself and it was done. Then the real problem arose - the problem of actual implementation in the field, in the various villages and towns of the state. There were thousands of Kudikidappukars, nay, even lakhs as it turned out later. All of them had to be persuaded to put in applications to the Land Tribunals.. The first hurdle came there. There were only about 60 Tahsildars in the state. Even if all the Tahsildars were designated as Land Tribunals, they could not be expected to deal with the very large number of applications

which were pouring in and of course the Tahsildars had their ordinary duties, which were already heavy. The idea of designating Munsiffs as Tribunals for this purpose was ruled out from the very beginning, because, in the first place their number was altogether very inadequate and secondly their legalistic approach would be a hindrance in disposing of Kudikidappu applications, whereas what was required was informality to the maximum extent possible, consistent with the requirements of the law. We discussed the question of appointing special Tahsildars solely for this purpose relieving the ordinary Tahsildars entirely of Land Tribunal work. But then in this there was a hitch. At least 100 Tahsildars had to be appointed for Tribunal work. The work being of a temporary nature, ending with the disposal of all the applications for Kudikidappu ownership, what will the Government do then with surplus Tahsildars? Just dismiss them? Easier said than done. I then raised the question, why not designate B. D. Os who had not much work to do, specially in post-intensive blocks as Land Tribunals. Some of the officers with whom I discussed the question felt that it would not do, because B. D. Os were not acquainted with revenue work and procedural matters and that would be a clear disadvantage. I argued on the other hand that what was required was precisely a good deal of informality and not mastery of intricacies of law and procedures. The question whether there was any illegality in designating B. D. Os also as Land Tribunals was examined and it was found that there was none. It was therefore finally decided that B. D. Os also were to be appointed as Land Tribunals. Thus it came about that only a few new Tahsildars were recruited and a large number of B. D. Os were designated as Land Tribunals. I do not now remember the exact number of Land Tribunals dealing with Kudikidappu cases, but their number could not be less than roundabout 100 or so.

Even with this however things did not move quickly. For there was the procedural difficulty still. When an application is filed by a Kudikidappukaran notice had to be served on the landlord. If the Kudikidappukaran did not know the correct address of the landlord, the notice would be returned unserved

and there would be delay even in the initial stages. This happened very often. Even if all these were got over, if the landlord was bent upon contesting the application, he could raise innumerable objections. He could insist upon letting in evidence to prove that the applicant is not a Kudikidappukaran or other similar defence. In short the procedure was dilatory as in a court of law. There was no way of short circuiting such procedures, because if that was done there was every likelihood of the High Court interfering with the Tribunal's decision on the ground of infringement of some fundamental right or other. How could this difficulty be got over?

There was only one way. And that was to persuade the landlord to concede the demand of the Kudikidappukaran where it was just and true. There was a very favourable climate for that. The struggle for land reform had been carried on in Kerala for a long time and most landlords were reconciled to losing some of their rights. They were prepared to concede the Kudikidappukars under them whatever rights the law conferred upon the latter without forcing them to go to court to establish their rights. In such circumstances settlement outside the Tribunals or without recourse to law was a possibility. A powerful mass agitation was at that time launched outside to force the landlords who were hesitating to concede the lawful rights of their Kudikidappukars. It was at this juncture that the method of settlement by mutual consent was conceived. The idea is this: The landlord and the Kudikidappukaran agree mutually the exact extent of land to be marked out for being transferred to the latter's ownership, the market value for the same and the amount of money to be deposited in court by the Kudikidappukaran as his contribution to the compensation to be paid to the landlord. An agreement is then drawn up setting forth the terms of the mutual settlement, signed by both the landlord and the Kudikidappukaran duly attested and filed before the Land Tribunal. The village authorities then measure the land, demarcate its boundaries and prepare a rough sketch of the plot, copies of which are supplied to both on payment of the specified fees. Thus the whole matter is settled. With this procedure thousands of cases could be settled within the course of a

single week or some times even a single day. Readers may recall to their minds the newspaper reports of the various 'pattaya melas' celebrated during the summer of 1970 and 1971. In one of such melas celebrated on the Periyar River bed in Alwaye, which I attended, hundreds of tents could be seen pitched on the sands of the river bed, each tent working as a village office wherefrom pattas were distributed to the applicants, duly signed and sealed by the proper authorities. The applicants could be seen waiting in long queues before each tent.

It was the invention of the idea of disposal on the basis of mutual consent that made the process so easy and expeditious. Credit for this invention should go to Shri S. Krisnna kumar I A S who did excellent work as Collector of Ernakulam Dt. in disposing of the maximum number of applications by Kudikidappukars. If this process was not resorted to, disposal of each application would have taken, on an average, at least six months and at that rate the disposal of about three and half lakhs applications (which is about the total number of Kudikidappu applications coming up for decision) would have taken years. The number three and half lakhs include both contested as well as uncontested cases. Out of these the number of uncontested which alone could be disposed of by mutual consent method would come to less than 3 lakhs. A majority of this was disposed of within the course of the first eighteen months or so.

Here then is an example of how even the present administrative machinery with only minor adjustments could be geared to the implementation of a massive social economic programme and did cope up successfully with the challenge thrown at it. Such instances unfortunately are rare.

CUT THE GORDIAN KNOT

K. C. George

Alexander the Great cut the Gordian Knot but did not wait or waste his time to untie it. Could we not also do the same with the red tape that has earned the much hated name of an 'ism'-'red tapism'-in our public administration? Why then should it be allowed to reign supreme over our administrative system? Why not cut it?

The question arises whether it is red-tapism alone that is responsible for the delay. My little experience tells me that it is not correct to blame red-tapism for all the delay complained of, though it has to be admitted that it plays the role of "original sin" in the administrative universe.

It is true that people who work under a system become part of it. But could they not also change it? I should think that they can and they should. But the part the administrative system or machinery plays in the matter of delay cannot in any way be minimised in as much as it controls the movement of the files as well as those that handles them. It is said that the last lesson the I. A. S. Officers are given is "don't get caught". Naturally in dealing with any problem their primary consideration will be their own safety and would never like to disturb the existing structure of the administrative system and take a risk.

People who are otherwise quite humane and sympathetic to the needs of the people and even those who had fought for

peoples' cause turn out to be otherwise if not anti-people, the moment they assume charge or become part of the administrative machinery. That this change of attitude is noticeable in all from an ordinary clerk to the Minister even, is a fact that cannot be denied. I have myself felt, while a minister, that the codes and rules of Secretariat procedure often tie your hands from expediting action where immediate action is needed. This is the role of the administrative machinery in causing delay. But if we realise that the issue on hand is more important than the procedure prescribed, you can bypass it, if not cut down the Gordian Knot. Trying to untie the knot means going through all the detailed procedure causing inordinate delay. It is true that when any issue or file arises in a department it has to wait on the desks of the concerned department and also on those of the Secretariat, from that of a clerk to the Secretary before it finally reaches the Minister for final orders. The Minister may have to ask for further clarification etc. and to send back the file to the Secretary and he in turn to the point of its origin. During its journey it will stop and rest on every rung of the ladder up and down like a heart-patient resting on every step while climbing up and down the stairs. The journey the file undertakes will naturally be long and during the period the person who waits for the final order may have some-times disappeared from the face of the earth in the natural course or like the one in the drama "Enippadi" committing suicide in the Chief Secretary's compound in utter despair. Those who sit under the fans in the Secretariat and work in that cool atmosphere may not easily realise that the files before them are bloodless substitutes for human life and that far away from the Secretariat somewhere some one is conducting a grim fight for survival and that the issue involved in the file on their table is going to decide whether he should survive or not.

I for one think that the machinery alone is not to be blamed for this delay. The Officers cannot wash their hands clean in the affair. A change of attitude on their part can find out ways and means to expedite matters. I have found that even well meaning officers who had spent years in the Secretariat dealing with files alone and not having any direct contact with people

and the country turn out to be 'diehards' and 'no changers' in a fast changing society with ever changing needs and ideas that call for new approach. I, therefore, think that Government Secretaries in turn should be sent out at intervals as Collectors to serve as a refresher course for them so that they may have direct contact with people and the country and understand that the world is not what they study in their text books or what they imagine it to be. I once had the experience of a Government Secretary who, having gone out of the Secretariat to study things on the spot with me, realised how his whole approach to the problem had to be reversed after it. He confided to me that the conclusions they arrive at are apt to be wrong for want of proper assessment and appreciation of what is real. With the necessary change of attitude on the part of the administrators I am sure ways and means to dispose off files quickly can be found out. During our 1957 Ministry when any particular matter needed quick decision we used to call the concerned officers, both from the Department and the Secretariat and discuss the matter thoroughly and take a final decision and issue orders. This saved the long journey of the files up and down and avoided the inordinate delay usually involved in such matters when allowed to be ruled by Red-tapism.

Here is a specific case to show how delay could be avoided if proper orders were issued anticipating the possible delay. An old file came before me immediately after I took charge as Forest Minister. The applicant, the widow of the Police Inspector who was killed during a struggle between the Police and the Communists in Shooranad in 1948 had applied for 10 acres of land during the Congress Ministry led by Shri Parur T. K. Narayana Pillai. The matter dragged on for eight years and no land was given to the applicant yet, in spite of the best intention of the Minister who issued orders to assign lands in her favour. What happened was this. The file revealed that several times plots were suggested by the petitioner and every time the Collector on the basis of enquiry and report of the Village Officer that the plot was not available for assignment for some reason or other, reported the

matter to the Minister. This was repeated three or four times during the long period of eight years. After studying the situation from the file I wrote as follows: "The Collector to take immediate steps to assign 10 acres of forest land any where in the Quilon Division to the applicant within a fortnight and report". The order gave the Collector ample freedom of action and land was assigned to the petitioner within fourteen days and the file was closed to the full satisfaction of the petitioner when there was a conscientious effort to get things done and red tapism could not intervene.

There are also cases of files disappearing or going underground. Once an old and important file was urgently called up by me. The Secretary in charge of Forest directed the Chief Conservator of Forests to send up the file immediately. The Chief Conservator of Forests after a day's search for the file reported to the Secretary that the file was missing and could not be sent up. The Secretary took up the matter very seriously and the Chief Conservator of Forests in turn tried his best to trace the file. But to no avail. After a week I got ready in the morning at 8 AM, appeared surprisingly in the Chief Conservator of Forest's office. The peon ran up to the Chief Conservator of Forest's and when he came hurriedly to the office I was sitting in his room. I told him that I would not leave the office without the file. He himself started a search and by 9.30 A.M. a search party began ransacking everything and by 10 A.M, it was placed before me on the table. It was certain that it was hidden by someone interested in it. Such things do happen in the Office and what has red-tapism to do with it?

The Gordian Knot should not be allowed reign supreme over our administrative set up and has to be cut. That in turn, I believe, will help to change the attitude of the officers who run the administrative machinery to some extent at least. Let us not hide our sins under the screen of 'red tapism' and shirk responsibility to our people and our country.

MEMORIES FROM A CAREER AS ADMINISTRATOR

Dr. GEORGE, JACOB*

I am recording a few instances from my career as an administrator.

I started my career as a college teacher. From there I went into administrative service through a special recruitment into the Indian Administrative Service. After functioning as a general administrator for several years in important administrative posts as Collector, Secretary to Government and Divisional Commissioner, I was offered the Vice-Chancellorship of Patna University which I accepted. After finishing my term as Vice-Chancellor, Patna University, I went back to the administrative service from where I retired on reaching the age of superannuation. After retirement the Governor of Bihar inquired from me whether I would take over the Vice-Chancellorship of Ranchi University. I accepted the offer. Before I finished my term as Vice-Chancellor of Ranchi University I accepted the offer of Kerala Governor and came over to Trivandrum as Vice-Chancellor of Kerala University. Even before I finished my term as Vice-Chancellor, Kerala University the Government of India selected me as Chairman of the University Grants Commission. I held that post for a few years and retired from there on reaching the age of 65.

Thus I have had considerable experience as a general administrator and also as an academic administrator. I am trying

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to give a few instances from my experience in different positions, of dealing with administrative problems.

1. When I was recruited into the Indian Administrative Service I got the benefit of my previous experience for determining my seniority in the IAS. On the basis of the seniority I became a District Magistrate and Collector after I had put in about six years in the Indian Administrative Service. One of the techniques I adopted in running the district was of consultation with many Advisory Committees at the collector's level dealing with many district problems. On these Advisory Committees the Additional Collector, Superintendent of Police, a few MPs and MLAs worked as members. Any important question on which I wanted to take a decision I brought before this committee for discussion. I could take advantage of the experienced officers who were on the Advisory Committee. After such discussions I issued order as Collector of the district for the guidance of all subordinate officers and offices. In these Advisory Committees conflicting interests very often came up and I developed a technique of dealing with these conflicting points. My approach was that all final decisions are to be based on certain criteria. I propounded a set of criteria to be adopted and generally got the members of the Advisory Committee to accept the criteria. To give one instance, when I was District Magistrate and Collector of Darbhanga district in Bihar the District Educational Officer brought to me a proposal for distributing grants to the rural libraries in the district. I asked the District Educational Officer on what basis the list was prepared indicating the amount to be given to different rural libraries. He said that he had prepared the revised list on the basis of the list that was already being followed. He had made certain changes in the old list because certain members of the Advisory Committee on Library Grants wanted certain changes. Two Members of Parliament and three MLAs were members of the Advisory Committee. I told the District Educational Officer that if we followed the recommendation of any member of the Advisory Committee without laying down criteria we may be showing favour to one place without considering the needs of other places. So

I asked the District Educational Officer to adopt certain criteria. First-the number of books in a library, second-the number of members of a library and third, the average number of readers using the library. If the number of books was more than a particular limit that library could be ranked as A for the number of books. If the number was below the level but still close to good it could be rated as B and those with books fewer than A and B could be rated C. Exactly in the same manner each library could be classified as A, B, C, on the basis of the number of members of the library and also on the average number of readers using the library. I suggested that the District Educational Officer could collect information on this basis from all libraries in the district. I then suggested that the library which had 3 A could be given the highest grant, a library with 2 A and 1 B slightly lower grant and other still lower. I got these criteria placed before the Advisory Committee and all the members of the Advisory Committee including elected non-official MPs and MLAs accepted the criteria. On the basis of this criteria a list was prepared for the distribution of the library grant for the year. This was accepted by the Committee. When library grants were distributed one or two libraries which used to get higher grant in the past and got lower grant that year complained to the government alleging that the DEO has bungled the distribution. The Department of Education asked for an explanation from the District Educational Officer. He came and consulted me and I asked him to report exactly what had happened. When the report reached the government, they issued general orders to all collectors and educational officers in the state laying down the same criteria for deciding the distribution of grants to rural libraries throughout the state. Thus the criteria adopted by Darbhanga district became the standard criteria for the whole state.

2. When I took over as Collector of Darbhanga district, the government was spending over one crore of rupees every year on relief to flood affected areas in the district. Darbhanga district is in the Kosi belt. People from the area who went away for work to other parts of the country came back to the Kosi during the rainy season for getting free ration. I was of the

view that this was waste of public money and that it was not in keeping with the dignity of the people to live on such charity. But any attempt to reduce gratuitous relief would have been opposed by the people of the kosi belt. So certain criteria were adopted. The population of the district was classified according to their income from land. Wherever there was a flood, the flood-affected areas were also classified according to the extent to which the place had been flooded. Only people with no income from land and whose little land was totally flooded got 100 per cent gratuitous relief. Depending on the extent to which the place was flooded the amount of relief was reduced. By adopting this criterion the expenditure on gratuitous relief for the district was reduced by 90 per cent of what it was in the previous year. The Advisory Committee at the district level consisting of MLAs and MPs accepted the criteria for flood relief and so this could be implemented without any difficulty.

Patna University

Patna University, when it was first established, was an affiliating university affiliating all the colleges in Bihar, Orissa and Nepal. Bihar Government then decided to establish a residential university in Patna so that the highest academic standards could be maintained. For this purpose they rightly decided that the colleges already existing in Patna should form a nucleus of the new university. This was considered to be a better system than trying to build up new departments in Patna. The colleges already existing in Patna were thus brought into the Patna University. All colleges outside Patna were then affiliated to a newly established university called the Bihar University. I was offered the Vice-Chancellorship of Patna University by the then Chancellor of the Patna University, namely Dr. Zakhir Hussain. One of the first problems I had to tackle as Vice-Chancellor was to determine the relative seniority of lecturers in different subjects in the government colleges and private colleges in Patna. The members of the Bihar Educational Service who were the teachers in government colleges maintained that teachers from private colleges could

get seniority in the university service only from the date from which the private college came into the university as a constituent college. The teachers of the private colleges, on the other hand, wanted that they should get seniority on the basis of their total service as a teacher in the private college. I had discussions with representatives of both groups and then I suggested a formula to them. I told them that when I was recruited to the Indian Administrative Service by a special recruitment the Government of India gave 50 percent credit for my earlier service. My earlier service was that of a college teacher. It was not related to administration and yet I got 50 percent credit for that service towards my seniority in the IAS. I found that teachers of the private Colleges were recruited on a grade which was lower than the government educational services grade. So I told the teachers of private colleges that they could get credit only for part of their services and not for their entire service. I evolved the formula of 2/3 credit for their services in the private colleges because their services in private colleges was on a grade which was only 2/3 of the government college grade. Government College teachers on the other hand, could get full credit for all their services as teachers. The government college teachers opposed this proposal and asserted that private college teachers could not get any credit for their earlier service. I overruled the objection of the government college teachers and maintained that since private college teachers had done work similar to what government college teachers have done they are entitled to get credit for their service. They could get only part credit for that and not 100 percent credit. I also told the government college teachers that if they pressed again for considering private college teachers as inferior I would constitute the private college teachers in a separate cadre. According to the university rules the number of superior posts—professors, readers in any subject—was dependent on the number of lecturers. So if the private college teachers are treated as a separate category readerships and professorships will have to be created for that category also. On the other hand if all teachers including those of government colleges and private colleges were treated as

one aggregate the number of readerships and professorships will naturally be quite high. The senior teachers in government colleges were very distinguished scholars and many of them deserved to be promoted as professors and readers. This could be done if there was substantially large cadre of lecturers. This argument appealed to the government college teachers and they agreed to my formula of government college teachers getting full credit for their service as lecturers in government colleges and private college teachers getting 2/3 credit for their experience as teachers in private colleges. The merging of government and private college teachers into one unified service was thus done.

Another problem which I had to face as Vice-Chancellor of Patna University was the question of seniority of teachers in the Medical College. Prior to the formation of the university, teachers in the faculty of medicine were given seniority with effect from the date they became teachers. I said that this was not quite fair. The seniority of doctors in medical services could not be ignored. So I said that in each discipline—medicine, surgery etc,—the teachers would be ranked in accordance with their seniority in government and for any further promotions in the academic line, their teaching experience and research qualifications would be considered. Thus the problem of seniority of doctors in the teaching cadres was finally solved.

So as Vice-Chancellor of Patna University I adopted certain criteria for solving administrative problems. I made sure that the criteria were generally accepted. Once the criteria were accepted all individual cases were decided on that basis and no departure was allowed. I believe this is a secret of good administration.

University Grants Commission

I would like to give another example of this system as I applied when I was Chairman of the University Grants Commission.

The Institute for Language Studies in Hyderabad used to admit students for Ph. D research in different languages. They

worked under very distinguished scholars in languages because the Institute has specialised in language studies. But the practice followed was that scholars doing research in the institute were registered as research scholars of the Osmania University and eventually their thesis was submitted to Osmania University and they got their degree from the Osmania University, which was competent to confer a degree. The director of the Institute had therefore moved the UGC praying that the Language Institute at Hyderabad may be given the status of a deemed university. I constituted an Expert Committee to work out the requirements of a deemed university. The Expert Committee had experts in different subjects from different universities and when that committee met I suggested to them what I considered to be the difference between a university and a deemed university. I said that in my opinion a deemed university is in no way inferior to a university. Only it is different from a university. A university is a place of universal learning. So the institute which is specialising in a particular field should not be a university. It can only be given the name, deemed university. The Institute of Science in Bangalore maintains the highest standard in respect of many subjects taught in the institute. My view is that the standard of a particular subject in a deemed university should be higher than that of any university in the country. In the convocation address which I gave to Jamia Milia in Delhi I had expounded my idea of a deemed university. Jamia Milia had become a deemed university and they were wanting the university to be a full-fledged university. After listening to my convocation address Shri. M. Hidayatullah who was the President of Jamia Milia at that time agreed with me. The Expert Committee which I constituted also agreed with me regarding the distinction between a university and a deemed university. The director of the Rural Institute in Gandhigram saw me at the UGC and wanted that

his institute be given the status of a deemed university. I expressed the view that I could not recommend his institute for the status because they have not done any research work of outstanding standard in any field of their specialization. The director of the institute later on came to see me to press for his request. He then said that he had discussed with the then Prime Minister who thought that his institute could get this status. I then told the director that I know these things better than the Prime Minister. Otherwise the Prime Minister need not have brought me as Chairman of the UGC. So I insisted on the criteria already adopted in respect of a deemed university being maintained.

GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN A DEMOCRACY

N. E. S. RAGHAVACHARI I.C.S. (Retd.)

March 1957-it was a historic occasion. The first Communist Ministry in a State had just been sworn in by the Governor of Kerala. The Chief Minister and his colleagues were meeting the Secretariat Officers and Staff within a few hours of being sworn in.

As Chief Secretary, welcoming the Ministers I said "Govt. Officials do not belong to any political party. We are expected to loyally serve any Government elected to power. On behalf of the Officials assembled here, I welcome the Chief Minister and his Cabinet colleagues elected to power by popular vote and pledge our full support to the Ministry in the administration of the State." These words were I thought, unexceptional. But within a few minutes thereafter the Cabinet met for the first time. I was asked whether in a democracy it was not necessary that Government Officials should have political consciousness. Therefore should they not belong to a party? If they did not have political sympathy for the party in power, how can they faithfully carry out the wishes of the Government?

I replied that there was nothing wrong in a Government servant having sympathy with a party or even formally belonging to a party as a passive member. India is a free country and the Constitution guarantees certain freedoms to its citizens and Government servants are also entitled to these freedoms subject however to certain limitations. I pointed out that in a democracy the political complexion of the Government can change

at any time. If a Government servant is too actively involved in one party, he will not be able to function effectively when there is a change in the party in power. Even if he did his work properly without regard to his political affiliation, his actions and motives would be suspected by the party in power. The alternative would be to replace all those with such political affiliations by those with affiliations to the ruling party. This would mean that every time there is a change in the political complexion of the Government there will be massive changes of Government Officials with the result that continuity in administration would be lost. Therefore, there is no alternative for a Government Servant, but to keep aloof from active politics. This does not however, mean that a Government servant could be totally indifferent to the policies and programmes of the party in power. If he is to implement the decisions of the Government he should familiarise himself with these policies. The advice he gives to the Ministers will be totally disregarded, if it is completely out of tune with the thinking of the Ministers. On the other hand, if he understands the policy, his duty will be to point out the pros and cons of implementing such a policy. His experience of administration might be helpful in evolving a final decision, administratively feasible. In this process he may have succeeded in persuading the Ministers to modify the original line of thinking. Thus a politically conscious Government Official without strong political links to any particular party will be an asset to the Government.

There was considerable discussion among the Ministers on these views and ultimately it was agreed that there was some validity in them. This was reinforced by subsequent developments. There were a few officials who used to meet the Ministers frequently to impress on them their loyalty and some of the Ministers felt that such officials could be relied upon. But after about two years, when it appeared that a change of Government seemed inevitable these same officials suddenly stopped visiting the Ministers and started courting

leaders of a different political complexion. This was an eye-opener to the Ministers and they realised the wisdom of depending on officials who were politically inactive!

I have dealt with this question in some detail because this sort of misconception about the involvement or 'commitment' of Government Officials continues and is even aired by persons in responsible positions. There was even a talk of a committed bureaucracy. But unfortunately no one openly talks of the commitment expected! Is it commitment to the party in power, or in a situation where party affiliations change frequently to a particular individual? These questions did come up during the period of the emergency and the subsequent period of rapidly changing political affiliations.

Yet, a certain commitment and loyalty is expected of every Government Official. His commitment is to the Constitution of the country. He cannot be disloyal to the Constitution. He cannot be a passive spectator when a Minister deliberately flouts the constitution. The least he can do would be to point out to the Minister the unconstitutional nature of the decision or action.

What if the advice of the official is disregarded and he has to implement a directive which is against the Constitution. There has been considerable debate on the question especially during the sittings of the Sahw Commission when it was alleged that several officials had actively connived at actions violative of the Constitution. One view was that the country had come to this pass because senior officials were more interested in pleasing political bosses for the sake of security of their official career and thus neglected their responsibilities. Another view was that these officials were coerced into such action under threat of transfer or punishment. The critics said that senior officials should not act irresponsibly and if they did not like what they were forced to do, they could resign from Government Service.

Now, Government Servants are part of the general population and just as one finds different types of persons among the

general population, there are different types among Government Servants. There are persons of integrity, as well as those concerned with their own well-being. But it is not possible even for a person of integrity to give up his job because he is asked to do something against his conscience. He has also got commitments to his wife, his children, other members of his family and so often he has to bide his time.

The answer to this problem lies in the politicians in power conforming to the spirit, as well as the letter of the constitution. As public awareness increases, the politicians will feel that their continuance in office depends on their conformity to the Constitution as well as to the generally accepted norms of conduct. When this happens there will hardly be any conflict between bureaucracy and democracy.

MY FIRST EXPERIENCE IN PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION

Prof. Dr. M. V. PYLEE*

My first experience of direct participation in public administration goes back by twenty-nine years. I was then a young Lecturer in the Department of Political Science and Public Administration in the University of Patna. In those days the entire state of Bihar had only one University which was affiliating not only all the colleges in Bihar but also those in Nepal. There were very few post-graduate departments under the university. All of them were started in the wake of India's Independence in 1947 and were therefore young but growing fast. It was certainly a great challenge and an opportunity to work in one such department. Being a small privileged group working in departments which were directly under the university, we the members of the Faculty were called upon from time to time to shoulder responsibilities or take up assignments which were not part of the usual routine work in a teaching institution. My direct involvement in public administration was in connectihn with one such assignment.

One day, in the month of April 1951, I was in the library leisurely going through some journal when I was called by the head of the department to see him in his office. As soon as I walked into his office he told me that the Vice-Chancellor wanted me to see him urgently. He did not tell me why but hinted that I was going to get some special assignment which would keep me in Patna for the entire period of the summer vacation.

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When I met the Vice-Chancellor a few minutes later in his office, he got up from his seat and told me simply: "Please, come along, let us go to the secretariat. I will tell you as we go along what I want you to do". It sounded somewhat mysterious but I followed him and when we both got seated in the car, he told me the purpose for which he sent for me.

The Government of Bihar, soon after Independence, had appointed a commission to enquire into and report on the conditions of the scheduled castes in the state with a view to taking all possible legislative and administrative measures for improving their conditions. The commission was headed by the well known Gandhian Social Leader, Thakar Bapa. Unfortunately Thakar Bapa could not make much of a contribution to the work of the commission as he was ill for several months. A year later he died and the government had to appoint a new chairman in his place. Their choice was Shri. Sarangdhar Sinha, the then Vice-Chancellor of Patna University. Under Sinha's chairmanship the commission had done considerable work but it could not get the report ready yet. A senior civil service officer who was the member-secretary of the commission was posted away as collector of a district and he wanted at least six months' leave to write the report. The government was not willing to give him leave for such a long period and asked the chairman to take such steps as were necessary to get the report ready soon. The first general elections were only ten months away and the government was anxious to publish the report and also initiate action on the commission's recommendations before the elections. The vice-chancellor wanted me to prepare the report and in this connection he wanted to take me to the concerned Minister so that we could have a preliminary discussion with him before finalising the necessary arrangements.

Soon we were at the Secretariat. We went straight to the Minister's room and the Vice-Chancellor introduced me to the Minister and said that I was going to write the report. The Minister welcomed me and said: "I hope you will do it as a free service to the Nation". The Vice-Chancellor was rather

irritated by this remark and asked: "Why should he do it free? He should be paid a decent honorarium. Are you working free as a Minister? Free service means no service. Before Independence we could speak of such things. Not now. If we want quality work we should be prepared to pay for it and pay well". There was no further discussion. It was decided that all connected files and other papers should be made available to me and I should be given adequate secretarial assistance. The Vice-Chancellor urged the Minister to pass the necessary orders without any delay so that I could start the work in the following week.

Necessary orders were issued in a few days. A senior Assistant who worked with the Commission was to work with me. I was given a stenographer in addition. If necessary a typist also was to be posted to work with me. All connected files and other papers would be made available to me. I could visit the Secretariat as and when I wanted to see any Officer for discussions or any other assistance in connection with the work.

On the first day when the assistant met me, he gave me a depressing picture of the situation. He said that the work of the commission so far was perfunctory: there was not much useful material available; the files contained more of tour programmes and connected details than of evidence given at the sittings. No one had taken care to study the problem and record findings. Statistical details were inadequate. Hence writing of a report on a complex subject like this was indeed a formidable task.

He was right. As I glanced over the papers it became clear to me. I felt that I should not have agreed to do the work without first going through the relevant papers and ensuring that I could make a satisfactory job of it. But then, it was now too late, I could not go back. It involved not only my prestige but also that of the head of my department who had placed so much confidence in me and recommended me to the Vice-Chancellor.

I had only three months at my disposal. I thought it was too short in view of the inadequacy of the material available to me. What should I do? After much thought I decided to spend a good deal of time in the university library to gather the background material. This was a wise decision. The library had a number of books throwing enough light on the background of the problem the commission was expected to tackle—the caste system, the conditions of the untouchables and many related subjects.

Within a few weeks I was able to prepare the draft of the first two chapters which were to form the introductory part of the report. With those two chapters I went to the Vice-Chancellor to find out his reaction. The old man—He was a shrewd, seasoned political leader as well—glanced over the pages for a few minutes and then looked at me and said: "This is excellent. You have made a very good beginning. Go ahead and let me have the first draft of the full report". After pausing for a few moments he added: "Pylee, you will not get what you want from the files given to you from the Secretariat. Never mind. Prepare the report as you think it should be. In any case, I should have it by the end of next month. Unless you hand over the Report to me I will not let you go for the vacation".

Now I knew fully what was to be done and how it was to be done. I had enough freedom to use my imagination. And I used it liberally.

During the next eight weeks I completed the first draft of the report and presented it to the Chairman. He soon called a meeting of the commission to finalise the report and approve it. I was a special invitee to the meeting, which lasted several hours.

Among the eighteen members present, there were five or six members of the State Legislature (both of the Assembly and the Council) all of whom belonging to Scheduled Castes. As soon as the Chairman concluded his introductory remarks presenting the draft report for the consideration of the members,

one of the Scheduled Caste MLAs got up and said: "Sir this is not a report but is a thesis! I congratulate and thank the author of this work for the magnificent work he has done, but is it fair that we adopt it as our Report?" There was uneasy silence in the room for a few moments! Then the Chairman said: "What else can we do now? During a period of nearly three years at our disposal we did not do justice to the Commission's work. We cannot delay the Report any further. The elections are only a few months away. If the Report is not out we will be attacked by the Opposition Parties and it might seriously affect our political fortunes. So let us spend as much time as is necessary today to go through the draft and give our approval".

The members accepted the Chairman's proposal and spent the next few hours discussing the draft. There was a whole chapter of recommendations. Most of them were approved as proposed by me in the draft. Some were modified and a few more were added. Thus the deliberations were concluded and I was authorised to incorporate the changes and finalise the Report. In another week I was able to complete the Report and present it to the Chairman. He convened one more meeting, the last one, at which the Minister and the Chief Secretary were also present. At that meeting the Report was formally presented to the Minister by the Chairman and watching it sitting by his side I could feel a sense of fulfilment, a feeling of great satisfaction that I was able to successfully complete the task entrusted to me with confidence by my Vice-Chancellor.

The Report was not allowed to gather dust at the Secretariat. The Government machinery moved fast and it was published within a few weeks and copies made available to the public. I was happy to see it in print before leaving Patna for a well-earned vacation.

On my way back to Patna after six weeks, I got a copy of the Statesman in the train and I found to my pleasant surprise an editorial on the Report of the Commission on Scheduled Castes which I had the privilege to prepare. The editorial

commended the Report and said that if the conditions of Harijans in Bihar were so miserable and degrading as described in the Report, the Government of Bihar had no justification to exist for the past five years as a Government in Independent India without having taken effective measures to improve them.

That was in 1952.

We are now in 1980.

Are the conditions of Harijans in Bihar substantially different today after thirty three years since Independence? It is a big question to which we are unlikely to get a ready answer.

CENTRE VS. STATE : ROLE OF THE PERMANENT SERVICES - A KERALA EXPERIENCE RECALLED

M. GOPALAN, (Retd.) I. G. of Police, Kerala

In any federal set up the relationship between the Central government and the Federating units is bound to create problems. The Indian Constitution, even from 1949 when it was first finalised, has had a distinct Central bias, but the States were certainly not conceived as having status roughly equatable with that of Municipalities. They are partners in the governance of the country with well defined areas in which their judgment and discretion are ordinarily final. As long as the same political party was in power in the Centre and in the States this concept was honoured unreservedly and Centre-State relations posed no practical problems. However, the picture changed when, as for example in Kerala in 1957 a political party totally at variance in its ideology from the party ruling at the Centre was elected to office in the State. Strains developed with results too well known to need recapitulation.

When political leadership at the Centre and in the State lose mutual confidence, the political aims gravitate towards dislodging the State Government by any means, fair or foul. Public servants are then caught between rival pressures and are in danger of being misunderstood by one side or the other, and frequently by both. Sometimes they too are personally drawn into the political controversies undeservedly or deservedly. The members of the All India Services, particularly of the Administrative and Police Services are specially vulnerable in

such situations. Examples of the problems which members of these services have had to encounter are many and these vary widely according to the nature of the issues, the relative political alignments obtaining for the time being, and above all the individual aims and value perceptions of the political leaders and public servants involved. Here I am selecting one among some of the perplexing but interesting situations of this nature which I had to confront during my tenure as Inspector General of Police in Kerala under Governments formed successively by three political coalitions, each different in its composition and character.

The Central Government Employees' organisations all over India had announced a countrywide strike from 19th Sept. 1968. The unions which were organising the strike were controlled by political parties which formed the coalition ministry then in office in Kerala. The spokesmen of some of these parties were offering vociferous support for the strike. A few days before the proposed strike the Central Government issued the "Essential Services Maintenance Ordinance", which declared the strike illegal, and certain acts like intimidation of loyal workers cognisable offences.

One morning, about four or five days before the day for the strike, newspapers announced in banner headlines "Kerala refuses to implement Central Ordinance". A spokesman for the Government had, after a cabinet meeting, told newsmen that the Government of Kerala will not implement the Central Ordinance. This nonplussed me as I could see in it the potentialities for a Centre-State confrontation which could place the conduct of the State outside the clearly defined legal limits and obligations of the State. Under our Constitution every State is bound to ensure compliance with the laws made by Parliament, and a Central Ordinance has the force of a law of Parliament as long as it remains in force. Therefore, the declaration attributed to the State Government was *prima facie* unconstitutional. I discussed the matter with the Chief Secretary and the Home Secretary who could not say anything more than that it was the announcement of a Cabinet decision, and that

any further instruction on the subject will have to await the return to Trivandram of the Chief Minister Shri. E. M. S. Namboodiripad who held the Home portfolio, and who had gone to Calcutta for a brief visit. The Chief Minister was expected back just two days before the date of the strike. We arranged with the Chief Minister's office that the Chief Secretary, the Home Secretary and I should meet the Chief Minister soon after his return. The text of the Ordinance was not yet available in Trivandrum. So I prepared and issued a set of general instructions clarifying the responsibilities of the Police in the event of wrongful obstruction and other cognisable offences which were likely to arise in the context of the strike, and the action to be taken by the local Police officers. These were only pointed reiteration of the clear and inescapable duties of the police under the Police Act, the Criminal Procedure Code and the Penal Code. I took copies of these instructions to the meeting and gave them to the Chief Minister, the Chief Secretary and the Home Secretary. I explained that what was stated was only what was essential to see that there was no overaction or inaction. The Chief Minister was informed of the Central Reserve Police Contingents which had in the mean while come to protect the Central Government offices and establishments due to a fear that they may not get due protection from the State Police. The Chief Minister heard us patiently and went carefully through the text of the general instructions which I had issued. He sought clarifications on certain points in the instructions and these were given. The meeting ended without any dissent, and without the Chief Minister expressing any view approving or disapproving what had been done.

The next morning's English papers gave in news reports from Delhi the text of the ordinance. I studied it in detail and prepared two lists, one of situations likely to arise during the strike in which action by the police was mandatory under the ordinance, and the other of situations in which action could legitimately arise if a specific complaint was made to the police by or on behalf of the aggrieved party.

I contacted the heads of the central government organisations, including the C. R. P., and told them that the state police would be posted to ensure free access to their premises and to prevent trespass or other offences from outside. It was arranged that the C R P should be used only within the campuses of the central government establishments for internal protection. It was also agreed that the policy will be to prevent any direct confrontation between the supporters of the strike and the loyal staff, and that if any place the Kerala Police contingent found it impossible to control the situation, the Kerala Police Officer in charge will seek the assistance of the available C R P. In such an event the latter should act only under the guidance, and to the extent of the help sought. Whatever action was taken under this arrangement will be the responsibility of the State Police to pursue and to justify if called upon. I took this precaution because a political campaign had already been mounted against the arrival of the C. R. P. in the State and the C. R. P. was portrayed as a force sent by the Centre with the deliberate intention of suppressing by physical force the legitimate trade union rights of the strikers and their supporters, and an infringement by the Centre of the jurisdiction of the State for the maintenance of law and order. There was a danger that the C. R. P. personnel, ignorant of the local language, nature and reactions of the people might act in a manner that in certain contexts might aggravate rather than pacify situations. There was also likelihood of fabricated criminal complaints being lodged by private individuals against C. R. P. personnel. It was important to minimise these risks by resorting to the operational co-ordination between the C. R. P. and the State Police as stated above.

I also drew up a plan of action under which the Kerala Police will take due steps in all matters where action by them was mandatory (which mainly would relate to offences committed within their view), and also register cases in every complaint made to them in other cases. Persons who were committing offences within the view of the Police will be restrained and

removed, and kept under arrest or released after the threat of a repetition of the offence was over, according to the gravity of the offences committed. In the case of complaints received, cases were to be registered, investigated and disposed of according to the evidence. The names and addresses of persons arrested, or restrained and removed by the police for their overt acts contravening the Ordinance, and who were employees of the Central Government, were to be ascertained before their release, and reported to the heads of offices concerned.

I then sought and obtained an appointment to meet the Chief Minister in his office and took a copy of the proposed plan of action with me. Shri Namboodiripad received me in his usual calm and dignified manner. I told him that I had come not to seek any instruction, as I did understand the complexity of the situation and the embarrassment it will cause him to give any instruction. I placed before him the copy of the plan of action I had prepared and explained that while I had taken care to see that the State Government could under no circumstances be faulted for not doing anything they were bound to do in the enforcement of law and the maintenance of order, I had also tried to restrict action within the limits of what was legally possible to do, in difference to the policy and ideology of the State Government. What was proposed to be done or not done was strictly within the duties of the police officers responsible, and for which no specific instruction from Government was necessary. I also apprised the Chief Minister about the strategy which had been evolved to avoid ugly confrontations between the C. R. P. and the supporters of the strike, which could cause complications. I explained that I had gone to him only because it was important that the Chief Minister should be fully aware in advance of the measures which will be taken and the reasons for the same. It was of course open to the Chief Minister to disapprove of my plans, and if he did so, I would have bowed to his authority as the head of the Government to make the final decision, but he would also have had to find another I. G. of Police to imple-

ment a decision which I was convinced would be unsustainable as a legal and constitutional proposition. I departed from the room of the Chief Minister with profound respect for the patience and silent understanding with which he had heard me, and did not interfere with the plans which I had formulated in the best interests of the State, the Central Government and above all in the due discharge of my duties as the head of the Police Department of the State.

The rest of the story can be briefly told. Radio messages went to all concerned for the Kerala Police to guard the entrances to all Central Government Offices from the very early hours of 19th September, and giving detailed instructions as to how situations were to be tackled. The striking Government employees and most of their political supporters were taken by surprise to find the Kerala Police present and acting everywhere. Large numbers were restrained and removed and disposed of according to the prescribed instructions. There were stray clashes between supporters of the strikes and of the political party in power at the Centre, the latter wanting the immediate dismissal of the Kerala Ministry. The police had to use mild force in some stray cases to disperse the rival groups before they clashed with each other. There were also some other interesting incidents during the course of the day which have their own significance and lessons, but these do not have to be mentioned here.

I was not very surprised to see that Police stations all over the State were receiving written complaints from Central Government offices relating to intimidation and other offences alleged to have been committed against them on and after 19th September. Instructions had already stressed the importance of registering every such complaint and promptly investigating it. The incidents of such large number of complaints all over the State made me suspect that this could be another test of the response of the law and order machinery of the State. I therefore issued instructions that the investigation of the cases registered should be completed expeditiously, and that at least one case

in which evidence was adequate should be charge-sheeted in court within ten days at the most.

Within a few days the Central Government called for comprehensive data from all States which would facilitate a detailed analysis of the extent to which the Essential Services Maintenance Ordinance was or was not enforced in each State. In due course the Central Government received the data from all States. I learnt later that enforcement in Kerala was found unexceptionable, and distinctly far above those of many States which had proclaimed their strong opposition to the Central Government Employee's strike.

As a postscript two aspects of the developments I have narrated above are also of interest. I learnt subsequently on good authority that when the State Government declared its open support to the Central Government Employees' strike and its intention not to enforce the Essential Services Maintenance Ordinance, the Central Government took a very grave view of the development because of its constitutional implications, and the threat which such a development if tolerated could pose to the future integrity of the country. The Government decided to wait and watch, and if the State Government were to really flout its legal obligation its dismissal would have followed inevitably.

A few weeks after the strike Shri E. M. S. Namboodiripad happened to visit New Delhi. The alert newsmen there confronted him with the question how the Kerala Government could refuse to implement the Central Ordinance. He retorted with the question who had told them that the State Government had NOT implemented the Ordinance.

I shall conclude recalling that all public servants, including Ministers who are also the foremost among public servants, are solemnly bound by oath or affirmation to do right to all manner of people in accordance with the Constitution and the law, and to perform their duties without fear or favour, affection or illwill. No alibi for acting otherwise, however,

convincingly argued on personal or even ideological grounds, can condone a lapse or prevent the steady undermining of the foundations of the finely conceived and carefully balanced administrative structure which our Constitution has gifted to this land of diverse cultures, races, creeds and languages. It is not uncommon or unnatural that Ministers in office will be forced to look at problems through politically tinted glasses. It is important that members of the permanent services should never have these glasses. The seniormost among them particularly should be ever vigilant and not fail in their responsibility to be true to the Constitution, the law and to themselves under all circumstances. At times this may mean having to suffer hardships and material losses, but these too are to be accepted as implicit in the advantages which our country and its people, most of them poor, hungry and denied the elements of justice, have conferred on them as the chosen few, on the assumption that they will use their comparative social and economic security for the good of the common man in the discharge of their duties.

FROM THE MEMORIES OF AN I. G.

N. CHANDRASEKHARAN NAIR
(Retd. I. G. of Police, Kerala)

It was just after the integration of Travancore and Cochin states. Mr. T. K. Narayana Pillay became the Chief Minister of the then Congress Government. And it was at this time that I had to encounter certain unhappy situations. Bye-elections were to be conducted in Neyyattinkara and Nedumangad constituencies. These elections were of crucial importance to the Congress party by a number of reasons. The most controversial question at that time was as to whether the exit of Mr. Pattom Thanu Pillay from the leadership had really weakened the Congress party or not. The Congress party hence considered the bye-elections as a prestige issue. For days and nights the ministers and partymen were strenuously working in the field for the success of the Congress candidates. By this time the opposition parties had gained strength. Besides, these two seats had necessarily to be secured by the Ruling party for their safe majority in the legislature and hence for the ministry also. So it was literally a life and death struggle for the Congress.

The Ministers confidentially asked me to make all recommendations for the success of the Congress candidates. I told them that it would not be a correct procedure as the police interference in electioneering will only deteriorate the very police administration. I also informed the ministers that by the time as Inspector General of Police I had issued circulars to the entire police staff not to interfere in electioneering and to be

highly impartial in the elections. Yet the ministers did not let me leave. They insisted to extend my personal help, even if not officially, for the success of the Congress. Neyyattinkara and Nedumangad were places where I could exert considerable influence as I myself hailed from Neyyattinkara and my father from Nedumangad. Naturally I had some close relatives also in both the places. Perhaps this might be in the minds of the ministers when they tried to pressurise me. But I could be only silent to their request. The candidate in Neyyattinkara constituency was also my close friend Mr. Balaramapuram G. Raman Pillai. Yet I did not extent any help to him. The bye-election in Neyyattinkara was over first and Sri. Raman Pillay was defeated. The ministers came to the inference that the defeat was due to my non-involvement. After this it was the bye-election in Nedumangad constituency. Being not well I was taking rest at home on casual leave. At that time Mr. Achuthan was the D. S. P. of Trivandrum District. The Chief Minister asked Mr. Achuthan to meet him. As per rules the police officials had to get prior sanction of the Inspector General for personally meeting the Government Secretaries and ministers. So Mr. Achuthan called on me seeking my advice. I advised him to meet he Chief Minister as he was asked for it by the Chief Minister himself. Accordingly he went to the Chief Minister's residence. The Chief Minister asked Mr. Achuthan to do every thing possible for the success of the Congress candidate in Nedumangad constituency. Mr. Achuthan replied that as per the orders of the Inspector General police, officials should not partake in electioneering and that they were to maintain utmost impartiality. Chief Minister replied ;

"Don't care it. The present Inspector General is not going to continue in position for long. perhaps you may be the next Inspector General of Police."

Having heard this promise Mr. Achuthan returned. But he did not keep it as secret. He came to me and disclosed the entire conversation with the Chief Minister, I asked him to

give a detailed note on the entire dialogue with the Chief Minister. Mr. Achuthan without any hesitation gave me a full verbatim report covering all the points. I have my own doubts as to whether there are similar officers with so much loyalty, now in any department in Civil Service.

In my official capacity itself I gave all these information to the Chief Secretary. The bye-election in the Nedumangad constituency was also conducted. Leaving aside the physical ailments I personally went to Nedumangad and visited all the polling stations and satisfied myself that the police was performing their duties in strict impartially following the spirit of every syllable of my orders. In that election also the congress lost the seat. The results were declared and then the ministers started discussions. They were thinking to shift me from the Inspector General's place. They decided to transfer me as a Peshkar. Then Indian Police Service was not extended to Travancore Cochin State which was a part B State. In the case of part B states sanction of the Central Home Department was essential for transferring or removing the Inspector General of Police and the Chief Secretary. Hence attempts for getting such a sanction were not spared to be pursued. Mr. V. P. Menon, with miraculous qualities of political pragmatism, high intelligence and courage, was the then Secretary to Government, Home affairs, Government of India. He was called over phone requesting to accord sanction to transfer me from Inspector General's place as decided on the reason that I had disregarded the request of the ministers to extend official or personal help in the bye-elections of Neyyattinkara and Nedumangad constituencies. But when the minister raised this demand the reply from Mr. V.P. Menon was "have you no other job there? If any do that. We know Mr. Nair fully well." Having heard this, the ministers abandoned the attempts to transfer me.

Translated from I.G. Smaranakal (Memoirs of an I.G.) by
Sri. P. S. Ravindran Nair

DISTRICT COLLECTORS AND VISITORS

by
T. N. JAYACHANDRAN

Visitors are an unavoidable part of any public office particularly in a democratic system. District Collectors are the kingpins of administration in the Districts and naturally they have to handle a large number of visitors. In olden times, particularly during the days of The Raj, when Collectors were more concerned with collection of land revenue and maintenance of law and order, visitors were fewer in number. With the advent of Independence Government have taken upon themselves the responsibility for providing more services and facilities for the people. There is hardly any area of human life with which Government at present are not concerned, with the result that the workload of the District Collectors has increased beyond imagination. Whether it be old age pension or flood relief it is the District Collector to whom people look up to for action on behalf of Government.

In any system of administration delays are bound to be there and it is more so in under developed countries. This may be for want of adequate personnel or due to complicated and cumbersome procedures. Whatever it be the members of the public who are beneficiaries of developmental programmes of the State have a feeling that if they contact the District Collector personally it may expedite issuance of orders.

A District Collector can certainly fix specified hours for meeting members of the Public. As a matter of practice, most

of the Collectors do it. But these hours are observed more in their breach. Unlike other officers of Government a Collector is expected to work also at his residence for which he is provided with a camp office and necessary facilities. The result is that the Collector is not spared by visitors even at his residence.

I had the privilege of working as District Collector in Kottayam from 1967 to 1969. Having had a fairly long innings of about 10 years in the Revenue Department in various capacities, I really had a blue print of a District Collector ready in my mind over which I had unconsciously worked all through those years. I thought that the best way to tackle visitors was to meet them during specified hours from 3 to 5 p.m. every day at my office. Much to my dismay I found that I had to receive the first caller at 9 p.m. on December 26, 1967, my very first day as Collector in Kottayam at the PWD rest house, where I was halting for the night. I did not have the heart to turn him away; but that set the tone for my system of receiving visitors throughout the period I was in Kottayam. People started coming in at the camp office before I left office, at the office during visiting hours and outside visiting hours and again at the camp office after office hours. Psychologically I felt uneasy when some body was waiting to see me. I changed my strategy and decided to receive visitors at all hours at the camp office and at the office unless I was in a conference or discussion. I used to go to office at 9.30 a.m. when I was not on tour and I was available there till 5-30 p.m. except for a lunch break of about half an hour between 1 p.m. and 2 p.m. Once the people knew that I would receive anybody at office between 9.30 a.m. and 5.30 p.m. They started coming to the office and within a week I found, much to my pleasant amazement, that I did not have any visitor at my camp office! The lesson I learned was this: if you were prepared to receive visitors at all times and listen to them and give an answer positively and in clear and unmistakable terms, most of them are satisfied.

Dealing with the visitors particularly for a District Collector is an unenviable task. A large number of visitors would be approaching the Collector with requests which just cannot be granted. It is better that they are dealt with politely and firmly and if their request cannot be granted it is better that they are told so straight away. The method of sending them away by telling them that their request 'will be looked into' will create more problems than you can solve. My own experience would tell me that if you give a patient hearing, the grievances of 50 per cent of the people would evaporate. Another 25 per cent will be satisfied with the assurance that you would conduct necessary enquiries and take a decision. In the case of the remaining 25 per cent there may be cases in which intervention by the Collector is really necessary.

During the period I was District Collector at Kottayam I never had any problem with visitors. I had occasion to receive them at all hours of the day and night. Anybody could come to my office or residence at any time and I could give a ready answer on most occasions. Looking back I feel that many nonissues which could have developed into explosive issues could be settled by my readiness to receive visitors and discuss with them at any time.

I am not sure whether this strategy would work in the Eighties as the Sixties were certainly different from the Eighties. My only feeling is that when everything said and done, people are people and they will continue to be so at all times.

MY EXPERIENCE IN ADMINISTRATION- MYSTERY OF MISSING MILLIONS

by
A. G. VASAVAN
Director of Fisheries

India is following the path of planned economic development to boost up the national economy, particularly after suffering the crippling consequences of foreign rule. Civil services in India have the added responsibility of functioning as an instrument of social change. It is therefore not enough that our public servants confine their activities to their limited administrative functions. They should have the necessary orientation and skill to deal with the new tasks and challenges for utilising the human material resources to the advantage of the community at large. Thus only they can respond to the emerging social values in the context of changing consumption and distribution patterns in the national economy.

The ever increasing role of the Government in developmental activities, education, health, and social welfare programmes today impinges on every aspect of the life of a citizen and therefore civil servants have to be more responsive to the fast changing needs of the society. If the civil services have to effectively play their new role and discharge their responsibilities they have to work shoulder to shoulder with the common man and thus appreciate his difficulties, needs and aspirations. This implies that civil services cannot function in isolation from the main stream of national life. In other words

the people should be given opportunities to associate themselves with the administration. The lack of association of the people in the administration, I have often felt, is the breeding ground of corruption that exists today. Men at the helm of affairs often fail to understand what is what when they have no contact with the people and their problems directly. As a result of the lack of understanding between the civil servants and the people a set of intermediaries exploit any situation to suit their purpose. They usually come under the guise of representatives of various organisations and interfere with the day to day working of the offices. I think it will not be out of place if I mention here one of the many instances of such interference. When I was working as a senior officer in the Fisheries Department in Calicut a man posing himself to be an influential leader of the Political party in power used to approach me to get things done. It was only after sometime that I could realise by chance that he had nothing to do with the party then in power. He was only a go-between exploiting the people in the name of the ruling party. I therefore made it a point to discourage such self-styled political personalities. Thereafter I kept the doors of my office wide open for the ordinary man to have direct access to me. Nevertheless my experience was that people still fight shy of offices and seek the help of the time honoured middlemen. This reminds one of another instance of exploitation of a poor fisherwoman. Once I chanced to see a hapless fisherwoman weeping on the roadside when I was proceeding to my office. I soon recollected to have seen her coming to my office some time back with certain middlemen to get financial assistance consequent on the death of her husband in an accident. I asked her the reason of her grief. She told me that the agents who brought her to the office exploited every-thing she had including the assistance given by the Government. If the economists wonder why millions of rupees spent by the Government for the welfare of economically weaker sections, do not get the desired results this is the mystery of missing millions. What is needed is to create a feeling in the minds of the people that the Government is theirs and the doors of

it are open to them always without the interference of middlemen.

I do not claim that I have been fully successful in creating such a feeling in the minds of the people. But still I have the satisfaction of doing what I could do in the matter. When we consider the case of my own Department specifically, the problem has ever been the elimination of the middlemen who exploit the department and the fishermen alike to their benefit.

Though the value of the fish has increased ten fold during the last decade the fishermen get only 30% of the value paid by the consumers. It is only the middlemen, who exploit both the fishermen and the consumers, are benefited ultimately.

Another exploiting agency is the capitalists who own the boats and the fishing implements and snatch away the lion's share of the catch under one pretext or other. I feel confident that the scheme of organising societies of the fishermen at village level, that is proposed to be implemented with the active participation of the fishermen will go a long way to solve the problems of exploitation by intermediaries. It will certainly improve the general condition of the fishermen community as a whole. The need of the hour is to gear up the administrative machinery to take up this new challenge and make the scheme a grand success.

PROBLEMS FACED BY A NEW OFFICER

Y. GEORGE

(Director of Treasuries)

Introduction

In my official career, I had to face several administrative problems. Some of those problems are still fresh in my hand. Eventhough, re-iteration of such cases may help others in analysing them for detailed study of the various aspects of public administration, it does not appear to be fair to narrate most of them, since some of the persons involved in such problems are still in service. However, I intend to narrate a specific instance of administrative situation which was actually faced by me and made me take certain administrative decisions. In this 'Case Study', I have depicted the 'Slice of administrative problem' accurately and comprehensively, as the main personality who centred around it is no more now.

Situation Leading to the Case

At the beginning of 1965, I was recruited as a District Treasury Officer through the Kerala Public Service Commission. After undergoing a short period of training in the office of the Accountant General and in a few Treasuries in Quilon District, I took charge as the District Treasury Officer, Alleppey. At that time, it was the only Non-Banking District Treasury in the State with currency chest and Small Coin Depot. As there was no Sub Treasury then in Alleppey town, the transactions in the District Treasury were very heavy.

The District Treasury Officer is the Head of the District Administration of the Department of Treasuries. But I was not familiar at that time even about the meaning of the word 'Administration'. I could not get any opportunity to undergo any training or attend any seminar on Administration, Management or any allied subject before taking charge as a District Officer. Eventhough I was having some prior practical experience in the working of a few departments under State Government as an intermediary Supervisory Officer, I was not aware of any of the management concepts or techniques. Moreover, I was the youngest District Treasury Officer in the State. At that time, there was not even a non-gazetted supervisory officer in the Department who was younger to me. All these induced me to feel that I was lacking in technical skill in respect of the items of work to be attended to by the lower level officers of the Treasury. The story of General 'Rommel', the legendary soldier who was adored by his friends and foes alike was in my mind. It is said that he could dismantle and re-assemble all the components in a Tank. At the same time, I found consolation in the fact that the Department of Agriculture is headed by a non-technical person. This gave me courage and fortitude. However, I had a vision that administration should achieve something which should be useful to the public in general.

I enquired about the line of action adopted by my predecessors in office and understood that three or four of them worked there only for a period of a few months and retired. This, it appears, could have prevented them from planning, organising, co-ordinating and controlling the affairs of the Treasury effectively during the short period of their service.

Facts of the Case

Within a few days of my taking charge of the District Treasury, I had occasion to notice certain instances of inordinate delays and red-tapism in office work. Certain persons who came late to the Treasury used to get things done quickly while others who had come early had to wait till late in the

night. There were also allegations of corruption against certain members of the staff. A few outsiders were always present in the Treasury campus. They posed themselves to be very influential with the staff and officers of the Treasury and used to get commission from the transacting public.

No 'Office Order' was available in the Treasury indicating the division of work and responsibility assigned to the members of the staff. There was also no system of accountability or responsibility. Discipline was practically nil. Members of the staff were discharging their duties only by custom. Most of them had so sit late in the night until the daily accounts were closed. There was no fixed time for closing the Treasury. As Parkinson has said, work in the Treasury expanded so as to fill the time available for its completion.

There were also complaints from the general public that the original chalan receipts are received back by them, only several hours after remittance of the money. In many cases, the original chalans could be received by the public only at the mercy of the Class IV Officers of the Treasury. Similarly, persons could not get payments of the bills and cheques in the order of presentation. The main difficulty was on the first few working days of each month when salary was disbursed to all departmental officers. There were four or five clerks in the Treasury to attend to bills and cheques. Each clerk was attending to bills of a number of departments. Bills were not delayed by them deliberately but were not being passed in the order of priority. They used to transmit the bills to the Treasurers' counter as soon as they are passed. The Treasurers in turn used to call the payees as and when bills were received from the Accounts Section. So, all the payees used to wait at the cash counter indefinitely to know whether their names would be called by the Treasurers. Consequently, there was a heavy rush always at the cash counter and the persons did not get any convenience even to count the amount received by them from the Treasury before leaving the counter.

In the Treasury, there was an Assistant Treasury Officer in the Gazetted cadre to assist the District Treasury Officer. He

was a very old man due to retire within a few months, and was working in the same institution for years together in various capacities. He used to attend the office in a very shabby manner.

The Assistant Treasury Officer was not taking any responsibility or interest in either managing the affairs of the institution or co-ordinating the activities of different sections. There was no attempt on his part to get things done through his subordinates. Rather, he was prepared to discharge the duties of even Clerks and Treasurers. On account of his long experience, he was aware of the rules and procedures of the Treasury. But he did not possess any human or conceptual skill. The fact that he was a Gazetted Officer just below in rank to the District Treasury Officer was not known to most of the transacting public. He seemed to take it as a blessing, as they would not approach him with any complaints. It appeared that he believed in 'laissez faire' principles of leadership. He was lacking in insight, initiative, originality, drive, tact, judgement and communication skill, but was having very good emotional stability.

To get acquaintance with the working conditions of the office, I visited all the rooms in the Treasury. I also took this opportunity to visit the room of the Assistant Treasury Officer and found that his room was not kept neat. The windows in his room were closed with very old sacks. There was also no 'Name Board' in front of the room.

Remedial Measures Taken

I felt that the Assistant Treasury Officer required a psychological boost to rise up to the occasion. Hence my first attempt was to motivate him by giving him a sense of security, social status, and esteem. On that day evening, I called him into my room and offered a seat and discussed with him about the general toning up of the Treasury. During the conversation, I stressed on the authority and influence of a Gazetted Officer in the proper administration and set up of the District Treasury. Incidentally, I referred to him the famous saying that "Apparel oft proclaims the man."

Within two days, the room of the Assistant Treasury Officer was made very neat in appearance and a name board appeared as directed. The Assistant Treasury Officer was supplied with a Table Cloth. Doors and Windows were fitted with good curtain cloth. He also started to come to the office well dressed. The transacting public and the office staff began to feel the presence of a Supervisory Officer in the Treasury.

The next step taken by me was to oust the intermediaries from the premises of the Treasury and create a situation in which any member of the transacting public could approach the Treasury officials directly to get their work duly transacted. A notice board was exhibited at three places on the outer walls of the Treasury, stating that original chalan receipts will be issued from the Treasury within 30 minutes of remittance of money and in case of delay, the parties should approach District Treasury Officer. This worked wonders. The members of the staff rose to the occasion and reacted in such a way as not to cause any complaints from the public. In respect of bills and cheques, payment was effected in accordance with the priority of tokens issued. Tokens were arranged daily morning in serial order. Arrangements were also made to send the bills only in the serial order to the cash counter for payment. This direction was also exhibited on the notice board for the information of the public. List of objected bills and cheques were indicated then and there in a separate notice board. Since the payees were called by the Treasurers strictly in accordance with priority of receipt of bills, the payees in turn, formed a queue at the cash counter. As almost all transactions were effected in an orderly manner without much delay, the transacting public did not require the services of intermediaries as their agents.

After establishing a principle of 'first come first served', time schedule was fixed and notified for the information of all concerned for presenting bills, cheques etc. The practice of giving undue preference to some persons by interposing

entries in the relevant registers by interested persons was discontinued, by assigning serial numbers then and there for all entries made in such Registers. Instructions were also issued to put up all concerned registers to the District Treasury Officer at the specified time. Separate time Schedules were also fixed for closing various subsidiary registers and accounts within the Treasury. In the result, the Treasury could be closed at 5 p.m. on each day after conducting all the transactions to the satisfaction of the clientele and the members of the staff were able to leave the office after finishing their official duties in time.

After convening a conference of all the supervisory staff in the Treasury, an organisation chart of the office was prepared. An 'Office Order' was issued prescribing the duties and responsibilities of each and every member of the staff. The members of the staff of each section were given seats around the 'Section Head' who was expected to exercise supervision. Table clothes were supplied to Section Heads, so that visitors could identify them. Staff conferences were convened every week in which all supervisory officers participated. A set of principles were also evolved in consultation with the members of the staff for effecting transfers of the staff within the District.

A Non-gazetted supervisory officer arranged for a few beautiful Boards which contained the following caption and a colourful printed photograph of Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru:

"I am not interested
in excuses for delay.
I am interested in
Getting things done."

A copy each of this Board was exhibited at prominent places inside the the Treasury.

Inpite of earnest efforts to tone up the performance of the office, it was found quite impossible to mend the conduct and character of a few senior Class IV employees, within a short

period. They felt it very difficult to adjust to the new environments. So I had to adopt certain measures to transfer a few of them from the District Treasury to create a new and congenial atmosphere. Most of them actually belonged to different Taluks in Alleppey District and they were eager to get transfers to their native places. But there was no possibility to satisfy all since such posts at Taluk Headquarters were filled up by persons belonging to those areas. I visited various Sub Treasuries in the District and told the peons there that the Senior peons of the District Treasury who were waiting for transfer had to be given chances to work in their native places. The peons of the Sub Treasuries preferred to avail themselves of earned leave for some time without losing any emoluments so that the peons in the District Treasuries might work in such vacancies. Thus a number of peons who had to be transferred out of the District Treasury were provided conveniently in Sub Treasuries. The resultant places in the District Treasury were filled up by persons recruited from Employment Exchange.

Retrospects

The attitude of the Treasury staff towards the transacting public had changed considerably. The staff exhibited a tendency for human behaviour to the public. There was also esprit de corps among the members of the staff. They considered administration as a group activity. Within the time available, there was optimum utilisation of money, materials and man power to achieve the specified goals. The members of the staff gave their respects to the Assistant Treasury Officer and considered him as their leader. The transacting public in turn recognised his position of authority. There was complete discipline in the office. The good work done by them was appreciated. The members of the staff noticed that they could represent all their grievances without any difficulty. The effect of motivation on them was very effective. The monthly accounts were prepared and despatched by them on or before the due date. The staff arranged

the office work in such a way that all references received in the Treasury were replied to at least within 3 days of their receipt. They even gave a few suggestions for improving the system of Treasury administration which were eventually accepted and implemented by the Department.

Conclusion

After several years, I got opportunities to study management systems and techniques by participating in various training courses conducted by leading Training Institutions in India. I also handled such subjects in the Kerala Institute of Public Administration, Trivandrum as a Faculty Member. From experience, I felt that the science of management merely lays down the rules of efficient management. But it is the art of management which makes all the differences — the difference between success and failure. Ability is not the same as performance; and achievement is the result of the way we put our capabilities to work.

I do not know whether my readers have got a real feel of the actual situations of the problem from the case narrated to enable them to appreciate the forces that culminated in the various decisions taken by me. I am also not aware whether this actual problem situation has provided and built up vicarious experience.

HOW I FACED A DIFFICULT SITUATION

M. K. N. CHETTIAR

(Director of State Insurance, Trivandrum)

I am referring to a situation in a unit of the State Insurance department working under the Regional Transport Office in March-April 1960. During those days separate offices did not exist in the districts. As in the case of other districts one clerk assisted by a clerk and a typist functioned in the Regional Transport Office Kottayam to attend to the insurance of vehicles in the area comprising of the Kottayam district, the Highranges (present Idukki district) and the present Ernakulam district.

At that time the validity of the Insurance Certificates of vehicles was fixed so as to expire on 31st March of every year so that the certificates of every vehicle in the region was due for renewal on 1st April. Since the renewal of the Certificate of Insurance has to be done for remittance of tax for the quarter commencing on 1st April, for renewal of permits, for testing etc., the work was also of very urgent nature. Any delay in issuing certificates of Insurance to the vehicle will create untold difficulties to the public. In view of the heavy work load and the consequent delay there was great scope for corruption also and really there was a mention to that effect in the Assembly at that time.

Towards the end of March, 1960, during the renewal period for 1960-'61 I was transferred and posted to this office.

The post was vacant and the work was in arrears from the beginning of March onwards. I was due to join duty after availing of joining time only on 29-3-1960. On reaching Kottayam on 22-3-1960, I paid a visit to the office to familiarise myself with the office and the Insurance section in the office. There were about 2000 applications pending and hundreds were being received every day. When the applicants, who were present in large numbers in the office, came to know that I am the new clerk, they had a sigh of relief. But when I told them that I am due only on 29-3-1960 they began to narrate their difficulties due to their inability to obtain permits, fitness certificate etc., for want of Insurance Certificate. I realised the gravity of the situation and decided to join duty forthwith without availing of any joining time.

On the first day the applications of those parties who were present in the office and were pleading the urgency of the cases were taken out with the assistance of the typist and attended to. Then I felt that this is not the correct method of disposing of the applications since it may not be possible for all to come and crowd on the verandah of the office to get their certificates. So after office hours on the very same day I began to arrange all the pending applications datewise and deal them in the order of receipt. Urgent cases were attended to only under the orders of the Head of the office. Since this system eliminated all scope for corruption there arose some unhappiness and non-co-operation. I had therefore to do the work single handed. I took up the challenge and faced the situation undaunted. I used to commence my work early by about 7-30 a.m. and attended to as many applications as possible during working hours. After 5-p.m. also I used to work and on certain days I had even to sit up till 1-a.m. in addition to the work on holidays. By two weeks of hard labour in this way I was able to control the rush of applicants but even then till the end of April, I had to sit over-time to complete the work. On 30th April I was able to leave the office with the pride and satisfaction that all applications had been cleared. It was seen that the

number of Insurance Certificates issued in that one single month exceeded the total number of the previous one year by 10 per cent.

If I had not adopted a systematic procedure and put in the extra efforts, the public would have been put to a lot of inconvenience. The delay in issuing the Certificates for about 4000 vehicles would give room for further enquiries and increase the paper work. Naturally this would have also increased the scope for corruption. I have the satisfaction that my way of tackling the situation avoided all these things. I had the co-operation of my officers and some of my colleagues. In my confidential report which I happened to see some four or five years later the then Officer had recorded "Hard Working, Honest, Sincere, deserve special consideration in promotion." Therefore I am also happy over what I did in that situation.

REFLECTIONS ON UNIVERSITY ADMINISTRATION

Dr. V. K. SUKUMARAN NAIR
(Vice-Chancellor, University of Kerala)

I became an administrator in the University in 1957 when I became Head of the University Department of Politics. This Department was set up with the assistance of the University Grants Commission under the second Five Year Plan. When the proposal for setting up the Department was approved the University College was part of the University of Travancore. However, by 1957, with the University of Kerala Act, the University College became a Government College affiliated to the University of Kerala. This left the University with only three Research Departments. The Department of Politics became the fourth Department of Study and Research in the University. As there was no separate building for the Department, classes had to be engaged in the University College with the permission of Government. It was only one year later that we got a building of our own in a corner of the the University College premises which we shared with the Department of Psychology.

The Headship of a Department introduced me to the realities of University administration. I was an ex-officio member of the Senate, the Chairman of the Post-Graduate Board of Studies in Politics and member of the Board of Studies in Politics for pass courses. There had to be frequent meetings with the Registrar and the Pro-Vice-Chancellor. I did not meet the Vice-Chancellor Dr. Ramaswami Mudaliar

as he was a part time Vice-Chancellor who resided in Calcutta and came to Trivandrum only for Syndicate meetings. He soon relinquished office and his place was taken over by Dr. John Mathai.

As Head of a Department, I had to frame the Budget and to put up proposals on all matters concerning the newly established Department of Politics. I once complained to the Financial Assistant of the University about the cut imposed on our Budget which made it difficult to get the required furniture for the classrooms. The Financial Assistant replied that I should have asked for twice the amount actually required as they usually cut half of the demands. This was a lesson in practical administration for me who was also a specialist in public administration.

Universities function in an administrative culture different from those of government departments. Cardinal Newman in a classic statement has defined the University as a Corporation of teachers and students. However, modern Universities are administered by a complex mechanism in which teachers, students and administrators interact. In fact it would be better to describe the government of a University rather than its administration. Government involves the making of policy as well as its implementation. Therefore we talk in terms of the governance of universities rather than in terms of their administration.

The executive head of the university is the Vice-Chancellor who holds office for a fixed term. He is styled as the principal academic and executive officer of the University. However, he has very limited powers. The executive power is vested in the Syndicate over which the Vice-Chancellor presides. A Vice-Chancellor's success depends upon his ability to persuade the Syndicate, the Academic Council and the Senate to accept his policies. It was my good fortune to be personally acquainted with all my predecessors in the office of the Vice-Chancellor of the Kerala University. Sir C. P. Ramaswamy Aiyar and Sir Ramaswami Mudaliar were part time Vice-Chancellors. Sir Harold Papworth, Mr. V. K. Nandan

Menon, Dr. John Mathai, Dr. K. C. K. E. Raja, Prof. Samuel Mathai Dr. A. Aiyappan, Dr. George Jacob and Dr. R. S. Krishnan were full time Vice-Chancellors. I had very frequent contacts with Dr. John Mathai, Dr. Raja and Prof. Samuel Mathai in my capacity as Head of a Department. I was a member of the Syndicate over which Dr. Aiyappan, Dr. George Jacob and Dr. R. S. Krishnan presided.

The Syndicate is a largely elected body consisting of six teachers, six non-teachers and one student elected by the Senate and five ex-officio members including the Vice-Chancellor, the Pro-Vice-Chancellor, the Secretary to Government for Education, the Director of Collegiate Education and the Director of Public Instruction. Elected members of the Senate belong to different political parties or interest groups such as teachers' and students' organisations. It is the task of the Vice-Chancellor, who chairs the Syndicate, to obtain a consensus. The Syndicate has also a large agenda running to even a hundred items at its monthly meetings. Experience of managing University bodies is required of the Vice-Chancellor. Otherwise he will find the position difficult. Equally important is the Academic Council with over eighty members which takes decisions on all matters relating to courses of studies. Mr. M. C. Chugla who was the part time Vice-Chancellor of Bombay University, in his autobiography, points out that chairing meetings of the Academic Council was a difficult job requiring the mastering of the agenda of numerous faculties. Meetings of the Senate, which approves the budget of the University, receive a great deal of publicity as the proceedings are reported in the press. When the Vice-Chancellor chairs the Senate and the Academic Council he has a dual capacity. As the Chief Executive he is sometimes called upon to explain the stand of the administration. He has also to be an impartial chairman who has to give a fair deal to all sections of the house.

I have served in the Senate of University of Kerala for twenty four years, in the Academic Council since its inception and in the Syndicate since 1969. I chaired these bodies in

1973 when I performed the duties of the Vice-Chancellor and have been presiding over them since 1977. One of the problems confronted by any University is that it is divided into various sections. Each person thinks of the groups he belongs to. For example the physicist does not know the requirements of the biologist. It is necessary for the University bodies to arrive at policy decisions which take into account the general interest of the University as a whole.

As I pointed out at the outset, Universities have a culture of their own. The task of the University administrator is to persuade rather than to issue orders. There are very often complaints of delay in arriving at decisions. I have found in Universities in the west the same kind of delay. This is inevitable as numerous committees have to be consulted. The management of a University is a different proposition from that of managing a business enterprise. Vice-Chancellors have to treat the teachers as their colleagues and not as their subordinates. In Academic matters, the Vice-Chancellor has to consult heads of departments, Deans and other functionaries. He is not expected to dictate to them. Today the Vice-Chancellor is called upon to deal with students and employee organisations as well. This makes the role of University administrator different from what it was a couple of decades ago.

The University today is a much larger body than what it used to be. No doubt it consists of teachers and students. However, the employees of Universities and colleges are also part of the University. The views and attitudes of the general public are also important in shaping the academic culture of a University. Today, thousands of students appear as private candidates for University examinations or are enrolled in correspondence courses.

While the University has to be responsive about the explosion in numbers it has also to provide for excellence in teaching and research. In pre-independence days, research was neglected in most Universities. This is no longer the

case today. The research departments draw their funds from several sources like the U. G. C., bodies like the C. S. I. R., the I. C. A. R. and the I. C. S. S. R., etc. Most research is collaborative research involving a team of researchers. It is the task of the University administration to provide a climate in which Research can flourish. Very often, the Vice-Chancellor is called upon to deal with the problems posed by individual researchers which cannot be dealt with by the time-honoured methods of administration. In such matters, the Vice-Chancellor has to cut the red tape and see that the required resources are placed at the disposal of those who are engaged in research.

ERRATA

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